

August 25, 2006

To: Cities, Counties, Housing Authorities, Redevelopment Agencies,
Other Governmental Agencies and Interested Parties

RE: *HELP Program* (Housing Enabled by Local Partnerships)

We are pleased to announce that CalHFA is now accepting applications for \$7.5 million of HELP funds. This is the first of two rounds of funding that will be offered during CalHFA's 2006-2007 fiscal year.

We are proud to report that during the past years, the HELP Program has been instrumental in assisting local agencies with the development of a broad range of affordable housing activities in communities scattered throughout the state. These activities include: the funding of revolving loan programs for development of homeownership and rental housing; multifamily rental rehabilitation projects and programs; transitional housing and shelters for the homeless; senior rental housing and assisted-living facilities; subordinate financing programs for first-time homebuyers; and self-help homeownership housing.

As of this date, the Agency has awarded nearly \$160 million in funds under the program for the projects and programs of 102 local government entities statewide, which is expected to result in the production of nearly 19,500 affordable housing units.

We look forward to receiving your application for these valuable 3 1/2 % deferred interest rate housing loans under the HELP Program. For your convenience, we have enclosed the HELP guidelines and requirements for the application package. We request that you pay close attention to the "program parameters" and "program priorities" sections that are located on pages 1 and 3, respectively. An original application along with a duplicate copy should be submitted to CalHFA, as follows:

By mail: PO Box 4034
Sacramento, CA 95812-4034
Attn: HELP Program

By delivery: 1415 L Street, Suite 500
Sacramento, CA 95814
Attn: HELP Program

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By facsimile: (916) 445-9315

By email: arose@calhfa.ca.gov

Applications must be received no later than 5:00 P.M. on Friday, October 20, 2006. We anticipate announcing selections for HELP Program funding by December 18, 2006.

We look forward to working with you. If you have any questions regarding the application for HELP funds or require additional information, please feel free to call Amanda Rose, HELP Program Manager, at (916) 445-9313 or Tom Nann, HELP Program Specialist, at (916) 322-0651.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Theresa A. Parker".

Theresa A. Parker
Executive Director

Enclosure



HELP Program

(Housing Enabled by Local Partnerships)

Announcement Date: August 25, 2006

The HELP Program offers a 3 1/2% interest rate loan to local government agencies for their locally determined affordable housing activities and priorities. Although the primary requirement is that the HELP Program funds be used to directly produce affordable housing units, there is, otherwise, virtually unlimited flexibility for the local agency to determine the specific housing activity and use of the funds in providing for the acquisition, development, rehabilitation, or preservation of affordable rental or ownership housing.

Proposals are competitively evaluated and relatively ranked using criteria to intentionally avoid any regulatory structure that would undermine a locality's determination of housing priorities. Open application periods are announced each Spring and Fall (typically February and August). Applicants (local government agencies) compete for approximately \$7.5 million of HELP Program funding in each round.

Program Objective

To provide affordable housing opportunities through program partnerships with local government entities, consistent with their affordable housing priorities.

Program Parameters

Affordable Housing. HELP Program funds must be used to directly provide affordable housing units. Housing units must be affordable for at least 10 years, with "affordable" being defined in the context of the unmet housing needs and priorities of the locality. HELP Program funds may not be used for technical assistance or administrative costs.

Local Government Involvement. Local government entities (e.g., city and county housing-related divisions and agencies, and redevelopment agencies) must have a direct involvement with their programs. Local government entity involvement can include financial contributions of Federal, State, and locality program funds, and contributions such as land write-downs, fee waivers, density bonuses, and local agency program staffing and administration, and other similar benefits.

Unmet Affordable Housing Needs. HELP funds are intended to help local government entities address unmet affordable housing needs as determined by each participating locality. Local government entities must demonstrate how the local priority was established and approved. Commonly, priorities are stated in Housing Elements, Consolidated Plans, or other documented housing plans. Eligible housing activities under the program are as follows:

- *Multifamily Rental Housing.* Rehabilitation and code enforcement programs; and revolving loan programs to assist with site acquisition, predevelopment and construction of projects; or financing to support the development of a specific project. (This housing category accommodates shelters, special needs that include group homes, etc.)
- *Single-Family Ownership Housing.* Rehabilitation and code enforcement programs, revolving loan programs to assist with construction financing, and subordinate loan programs for homebuyers. Please Note: The Agency's new Residential Development Loan Program (RDLP) provides financing for site acquisition and predevelopment activities for infill housing; you can obtain further information on this program at CalHFA's website (www.calhfa.ca.gov). Additionally, HELP and RDLP cannot be accessed for the same project, unless HELP is used exclusively to provide construction financing or subordinate loans for the homebuyers of that project.

Loan Conditions and Repayment. HELP funds are available to a local government entity as an unsecured loan from CalHFA for up to 10 years at 3 1/2% simple interest per year, and carry minimal restrictions and conditions. Repayment is backed by the general obligation of the local government entity and is required, in full, no later than 10 years from the date a loan agreement is executed. The local government entity shall assure and demonstrate that it possesses full authority to enter into the loan agreement and to repay the loan under the terms and conditions of the loan agreement.

Loan-to-Lender Format. Under this format, the local government entity contracts to repay CalHFA and relends or otherwise utilizes the funds for its stated purposes. The local government entity does not provide property or other resources as collateral.

General Considerations for Program Design

Evaluation Criteria. Proposals will be ranked on a competitive basis, using the following criteria:

- extent to which assisted units are affordable (term, depth, amount, proportion of assisted units within project, relative affordability given the market)
- efficiency of program costs (interest rate, administrative and staffing costs, source and assurance of HELP loan repayment, timing of HELP repayment, etc.). NOTE: If the HELP Program funds are intended to be reloaned by the local government entity to their program participant(s), then the interest rate on the reloaned funds should be as low as practical to provide the maximum benefit to the assisted households.
- maximization of benefit (number of units, HELP funds per unit, number of persons to benefit, etc.)
- implementation readiness (local agency experience with the type of housing activity, staffing and administrative capacity, local agency financial capacity, site control, requisite zoning and entitlements, local programs in place, drafted implementation plan, market and risk analyses, other financing sources in place, authority to proceed has been provided by local government, etc.)
- relative resource impact in directly achieving program objectives (the locality's relative ability to contribute funds, staffing, administration and in-kind services; and the depth of leveraging provided)
- comprehensiveness of physical design (physical design aspects that enable the residents and incorporation of the housing into the community; physical design aspects of

consistency of residential development in relation to surrounding land use) and resident support structure (that potentially includes, as appropriate, homeownership education and training, community building, participatory management or governance, personal enrichment, direct support services, and linkages to local support services, etc.)

Documented Housing Plans. Proposals must include documented housing plans that demonstrate that the proposed housing activity described in the application has been identified as a local housing priority. Eligible documented housing plans include the Housing Elements, Consolidated Plans, redevelopment plans or other general housing plans that the locality's governing board has ratified. Applications must also include evidence that a plan has been approved.

Federal, State, and Local Requirements. Federal, State or local government requirements may apply in this process depending on the nature and structure of the local program. These requirements may include Davis-Bacon and/or State Prevailing Wages and compliance with Article 34 of the California State Constitution.

If the applicant to the HELP Program is a city or county rather than a separate legal entity such as a redevelopment agency or housing authority, the applicant must address the requirements of Article 16, Section 18 (public finance indebtedness limitation), of the California Constitution. If a city or county is awarded funding, the agency will require an opinion letter from its legal counsel to confirm that entering into a loan agreement under the Program is not in violation of this requirement.

Equitable Distribution of Funds. One of CalHFA's goals is to ensure an equitable distribution of HELP funds throughout California. The HELP Program staff will use equitable distribution as a factor in the application ranking process to the extent necessary to achieve this goal.

Priorities for this Funding Round

The eligible income levels for homeownership and rental housing activities under this application are 120% of area median income (AMI) or less and at or below 80% of AMI, respectively.

CalHFA will give preference to applications from local government entities whose housing element of the general plan have been approved by the State Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) pursuant to the requirements of Article 10.6 (commencing with Section 65580) of Chapter 3 of Division 1 of Title 7 of the Government Code.

Proposal Limitations

- Applicants are limited to local government entities (i.e., city, county, housing authority, redevelopment agency, etc.).
- Proposals are limited to a maximum request of \$1,500,000.
- Applicants are limited to one proposal in this funding round.
- Applicants are limited to one approved proposal in this fiscal year, which begins July 1 and ends June 30.
- Only one proposal for a specific project or program may be submitted (e.g., multiple proposals for the same project or program from the redevelopment agency and housing authority located in the same city will not be accepted).

- Proposals for a particular project or program, regardless of the applicant, will be limited to a maximum of one approved funding per fiscal year and two approved fundings, overall.

Documentation Required for Application Package

The documentation and information required below is not all-inclusive. CalHFA may require additional documentation, as necessary, to evaluate and rank broadly varying program proposals.

Applicant and Proposal Information

1. Name and address of Applicant (i.e. city, county, housing authority, redevelopment agency, etc.).
2. Mailing address of Applicant, if different than street address.
3. Name of chief administrator and position title for Applicant.
4. Contact person for application purposes: name, position title, address (if different than above), phone number, fax number, email address (if applicable).
5. Description of the Applicant and its history and experience with housing activities. Include the number of units and type(s) of housing developed, rehabilitated, and/or under management.
6. Description of Applicant's experience and capacity to implement the housing program being proposed.
7. Provide an executive summary of the proposal of not more than two pages in length. The summary should include: the character and purpose of the proposal, the amount of HELP funds that are being requested, the amount and nature of other funding sources, the implementation time frame, and the resources and capacity that will be necessary to implement the proposal.
8. Provide a detailed description of the proposed program. The proposal should include, at a minimum:
 - The type of program, the development process, time lines for requiring funding requests from CalHFA, and time lines for implementation and completion.
 - The number of units and households expected to benefit from the program.
 - The local government agency's affordability limits for tenants or homeowners and the means by which the requirements will be applied or secured by the property (development agreement, resale restrictions, loan agreement, deed restrictions, zoning ordinance, etc.).
 - A statement that describes how the proposal addresses an unmet affordable housing need and how the local priority was established; documentation evidencing the local priority; and indication of the local authority or entity that made the determination of the housing priority. (Include copies of the documentation in which the housing need has been identified. Acceptable documentation includes identified portions of housing elements, consolidated plans, etc.)
 - A description of the comprehensive features of the proposed program, such as the physical design of the developments and its incorporation into the surrounding community;

and the appropriate resident support structures such as homebuyer education and training, the community building aspect of the program, participatory management or governance, personal enrichment or support services provided, etc.

- The amount of funding and term of loan that is being requested from CalHFA and the method and security and/or guarantee for repaying the loan.
- If the applicant is a city or county, rather than a separate legal entity such as a redevelopment agency or housing authority, the applicant must address the requirements of Article 16, Section 18 (public finance indebtedness limitation), of the California Constitution by providing an opinion from applicant's legal counsel that entering into a loan agreement under HELP is not in violation of Article 16, Section 18. The opinion must be submitted as an attachment to the application.
- The local government involvement in terms of financial contributions of federal, State, and locality program funds, and administrative contributions such as land write-downs, fee waivers, density bonuses, and local agency program staffing and administration responsibilities, and all other sources of funds, etc. (Please indicate if other CalHFA Homeownership or Rental loan programs will also be utilized).
- As applicable to the applicant/entity, please provide the status of tax-increment funds, including categories for funds that are encumbered, unencumbered, not committed, or considered "excess surplus".
- Evidence of site control or indications of potential site control, locality programs that are already in place that will be jointly utilized, drafted implementation plans, program implementation time lines, market and risk analyses, evidence of other financing sources in place, and other indications that the proposed program has been well-developed and that implementation can begin as immediately as possible.

Other Requirements

1. *Attach a resolution*, duly executed by the governing board of the local government agency (the applicant), which grants the authority to a particular signatory to make application to CalHFA for the HELP Program to incur an indebtedness and execute loan agreements, commit specific local government agency resources as also detailed in the proposal to CalHFA, and take other actions necessary to facilitate the proposed program.

Proposals will be rejected if the resolution is not received by the due date and does not grant authority to a signatory to make application to the HELP Program.

2. *Attach one (1) copy of the Housing Element.*

Additionally, attach one (1) copy of each of the applicable of the local consolidated plan, redevelopment plan, and other documented government housing plans.

Provide evidence that the attached Housing Element and/or plan(s) has been ratified by the appropriate local governing body. Highlight applicable excerpts that identify the proposed housing activity as a local housing priority.

Applications that are not in compliance with this requirement by the final due date will be rejected.

Application Submittal

Applications must be submitted in duplicate and received no later than 5:00 P.M. on Friday, October 20, 2006. CalHFA anticipates that the HELP Program participants for this round of funding will be selected and announced by December 18, 2006.

Applications may be delivered to CalHFA by the following methods:

By mail:	PO Box 4034 Sacramento, CA 95812-4034 Attn: HELP Program
By delivery:	1415 L Street, Suite 500 Sacramento, CA 95814 Attn: HELP Program
By facsimile:	(916) 445-9315
By email:	arose@calhfa.ca.gov